

COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

P.O. BOX 10163
SAN JUAN, PR 00908-1163

May 22, 2006

Office of the Secretary

Docket Clerk
Fruit & Vegetable Programs, AMS, U.S.D.A.
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Mail Stop 0243
Washington, DC 200250-0243

Re: Docket Number FV-1290-1PR
FR Vol. 71, No. 76, pages 20353-20357

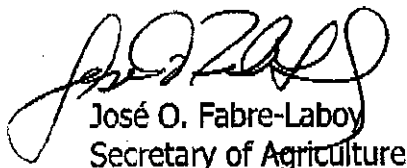
To Whom It May Concern:

I am submitting this letter on behalf of the agricultural producers and communities in Puerto Rico, in our continuing efforts to promote many diverse agricultural products. We would like to commend the USDA / Agriculture Marketing Service for their support to this regulation, and their mission to increase the competitiveness of specialty crop agriculture in the USA.

The block grant, when implemented, will be a great benefit in our goal to provide superior quality products for the U.S. market. Money and programs targeted for fresh products support will result in positive results by emphasizing the nutrition and flavor aspects of many products that have been neglected in the past. In fact, many fresh products are not conducive to "value added" processing, and need specialized support to emphasize their contribution to a healthy diet.

We believe in the initiative and respectfully add our support to the intent of the project. We send our thanks and appreciation to the Department for protecting the fresh aspect of this project.

Sincerely,



José O. Fabre-Laboy
Secretary of Agriculture

C Mr. Lloyd Day, Administrator, Agriculture Marketing Service

"Agriculture, hope of the future"